



For Immediate Release

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Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention Program

People with Diabetes are at Twice the Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke

(Salt Lake City, UT) - Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Utah and the United States, and stroke is third. However, increasing evidence is showing that the relationship between these two conditions and diabetes is much closer than most people realize.

In 2002, close to 72,000 Americans died of diabetes, but even more individuals (108,000) died of cardiovascular diseases related to diabetes.

According to the Utah Department of Health, Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (DPCP) and Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program (HDSPP), people with diabetes are at an extremely high risk for heart attack and stroke. The 2002 Utahns with Diabetes Survey, conducted by the DPCP, found that 60.5 percent of Utahns with diabetes also had high cholesterol levels and 56.8 percent had high blood pressure. The 2001 Utah In-Patient Hospital Discharge Database reports that among Utahns who were discharged for stroke, over one in five also had diabetes.

"Utahns with diabetes are at a much higher risk for heart disease and stroke than Utahns without diabetes, but they can significantly reduce that risk by following a few simple steps," said Nancy Neff, DPCP Program Manager.

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Be Smart about Your Heart: Control the ABCs of Diabetes is a campaign sponsored by the National Diabetes Education Program and supported by the DPCP and the HDSPP. The campaign is designed to increase awareness of the extra risk for heart disease and stroke among people with diabetes.

To reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke, Utahns with diabetes should follow the ABC's of diabetes control.

A — A1c - A test that measures average blood sugar levels over the last three months

B — Blood Pressure - High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard

C — Cholesterol - Bad cholesterol, or LDL, builds up and clogs your arteries

People with diabetes should discuss the following issues with their doctor

- What are my A1C, blood pressure and cholesterol numbers?
- What are my treatment goals?
- What do I need to do to reach and maintain my goals?

To learn more about the ABCs of diabetes, heart disease, or stroke, Utahns with diabetes should talk to their doctor. Or for additional information, visit

www.checkyourhealth.com. A free information packet is available by calling the Utah Department of Health Resource Line at 1-888-222-2542.

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The Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention Program (formerly the Cardiovascular Health Program) is funded by a combination of state and federal monies, including a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program is implementing a statewide plan with community partners to address cardiovascular disease and stroke risk factors and promote heart healthy messages to assist Utahns in making healthy choices at school, at work, and in the community.

The Utah Diabetes Prevention and Control Program is funded solely by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program works in partnerships to improve the quality of life of all Utahns at risk for, or affected by, diabetes.